



DNR Public Land Strategy – Frequently Asked Questions

What is the land strategy?

The land strategy provides a framework for the conservation, use and management of state-owned public lands to ensure their best use for the benefit of Michigan residents, visitors and natural resources. The strategy explains why a public land base is so important. It also provides goals, strategies and measurable objectives to guide the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in protecting and preserving the state's natural and cultural resources, providing spaces for quality outdoor recreation opportunities, and promoting natural resources management on the public lands it's charged with managing.

What public lands are covered in the land strategy?

Michigan has an abundance of public lands, including more than 3.6 million acres managed by the federal government and tens of thousands of acres of lands managed by counties, municipalities and townships. This plan will recognize the importance of these other public lands but will focus almost exclusively on those 4.6 million acres of state lands and 6.4 million acres of mineral rights administered and managed by the DNR.

Why is the DNR working on the land strategy?

As required by Public Act 240 of 2018, the DNR must update the existing land strategy – created in 2013 and approved by the Legislature and adopted by the governor in 2018 – and again provide it to the Legislature for consideration and approval in 2021. Because the existing strategy was developed more than seven years ago, it's important to revisit strategy components for their effectiveness, and ensure updated goals best support the work the DNR is doing to care for Michigan's 4.6 million acres of public lands.

When will the strategy be complete?

The updated land strategy must be submitted to the Michigan Legislature for consideration and approval by July 1, 2021. As required by statute, the report submitted to the Legislature will contain the following components: proposed changes to the original goals; strategies and measurable objectives, including what should be kept, modified or removed and why; progress toward the goals set forth in the existing strategy; and documentation of the DNR's engagement and collaboration with local units of government.

How much public land does the DNR manage in Michigan?

The DNR takes care of almost 4.6 million acres of public lands owned by Michigan residents, in addition to 6.4 million acres of mineral rights. When these lands – state parks, trails, game and wildlife areas, forests and other resources – are well managed, they contribute significantly to the health of our residents, our environment and our economy. Public lands also offer plentiful opportunities for people to snowmobile, boat, hunt, camp, hike, watch wildlife, learn about history and much more.

How will this improve public lands access/opportunities for residents?

In addition to providing a framework for the conservation, use and management of public lands owned by the people of Michigan, the strategy also outlines the key characteristics and criteria for future land acquisitions and transactions. With a focus on consolidating ownership around the existing land base and increasing the public land opportunities near the populations in southern Michigan, the strategy will help identify critical priorities to improve access to public lands.

Where can I get more information?

More information about the land strategy, background information and progress on the updated strategy can be found at Michigan.gov/PublicLands. Drafts and components of the updated strategy available for public review and comment will be posted to the website throughout the update process.

How can I participate in this process?

To participate in the land strategy process, visit Michigan.gov/PublicLands and use the interactive map to drop a pin on the location of the public lands that you value the most. Then complete a three-question survey telling us why public lands matter to you. The results of the survey will assist in the development of the updated strategy.

Additionally, the DNR will accept public input about the strategy update process via email at DNR-LandStrategy@Michigan.gov.

Regional public meetings and stakeholder meetings around the state currently are being planned. Check Michigan.gov/PublicLands for updates and the meeting schedule.